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Daily Highlights

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MONDAY HIGHLIGHTS

- + Secretary-General to go to Sarajevo on Wednesday; in separate letters to Bosnian leaders, says it is imperative to take all steps to stop hostilities and alleviate suffering.
- + Security Council condemns violations of Bihac safe area and demands immediate withdrawal of Bosnian Serb forces; demands unconditional cease-fire in region with intensified negotiations towards territorial settlement.
- + UNPROFOR cease-fire proposal for Bihac safe area accepted in principle by Bosnian Government; Under-Secretary-General for Peace-Keeping Operations says UNPROFOR commanders have made heroic effort in carrying out United Nations mandate in Bosnia and Herzegovina.
- + Secretary-General recommends extension of UNAMIR mandate till 9 June 1995; underlines importance of regional efforts by Governments and OAU in cooperation with United Nations to find durable solutions to problems of Rwanda.
- + Secretary-General travels from Algeria to Morocco; to chair second session in Marrakech of Advisory Group for preparation of United Nations fiftieth anniversary.
- + International community and multinational force in Haiti must make disarmament of pockets of resistance there absolute priority, General Assembly told, as it considers draft resolution on democracy and human rights in that country.
- + Third Committee (Social, Humanitarian and Cultural) approves draft resolutions by which General Assembly would condemn use of unaccompanied refugee minors as soldiers and human shields.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali will travel to Sarajevo in Bosnia and Herzegovina on Wednesday, according to a United Nations spokesman. The Secretary-General has sent separate letters to President Alija Izetbegovic of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the leader of the Bosnian Serbs, Radovan Karadic, in which he said it was imperative that at this moment to take all steps to stop the hostilities and alleviate the suffering of the population of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Secretary-General was last in Sarajevo on 31 December 1992.

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The Security Council has demanded the withdrawal of all Bosnian Serb forces from the Bihac safe area and condemned in the strongest possible terms all violations there, in particular, the "flagrant and blatant" entry of Bosnian Serb forces. In a statement by its President, Madeleine Albright (United States), on Saturday evening, the Council also demanded that all parties agree to an immediate and unconditional cease-fire in the Bihac region, particularly in and around the safe area.

The Council also demanded that all hostile acts across the border between the republics of Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina cease immediately and that the "so-called Krajina Serb forces" withdraw immediately from the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Council called for an end to hostilities throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina in pursuit of the territorial settlement proposed by the Contact Group as part of an overall settlement, reiterated its full support for the settlement, and demanded that the Bosnian Serb party accept it unconditionally and in full.

Finally, the Council expressed full support for the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) in implementing its mandate to deter attacks against safe areas. The Council called upon the parties to ensure freedom of movement for the UNPROFOR, for the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), and for necessary supplies for the UNPROFOR and for the civilian population throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia. The Council said it would monitor compliance with the terms of its statement and react appropriately.

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An UNPROFOR cease-fire proposal for the Bihac safe area had been accepted in principle by the Bosnian Government, according to Kofi Annan, Under-Secretary-General for Peace-keeping Operations. The Bosnian Serb authorities had not yet given their response. The three-point proposal, which was delivered to both parties by the Commander of UNPROFOR forces in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Lieutenant-General Michael Rose, yesterday, involves the demilitarization of the safe area, turning it over to UNPROFOR, and interposing its peace-keepers in the sensitive areas there.

Mr. Annan said the United Nations had not failed in its mandate as a peace-keeper in Bosnia and Herzegovina. It had provided humanitarian assistance to millions of people through two winters, was preparing for a

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third one, and had protected civilian populations in the enclave. Above all, the deployment of UNPROFOR had confined the conflict and prevented it from spilling across the boundaries of the former Yugoslavia.

He went on to stress that the Organization did not have the resources or the mandate to play the role of enforcer and some of the actions it was being asked to undertake were enforcement -- a role which would require between 300,000 to 500,000 troops. It would be imprudent for any commander on the ground to take action that he could not carry through, which placed his troops at risk and which would not necessarily help the situation. An additional 25,000 to 30,000 troops would have been needed to monitor any cease-fire, he noted.

Speaking in support of the UNPROFOR leadership, Mr. Annan said Special Representative Yasushi Akashi, General Bertrand de Lapresle and Lieutenant-General Rose had done a heroic job in pursuing the United Nations mandate in Bosnia. Peace-keepers were usually the first on ground, the last to leave and the first to be criticized, he added. Any decision to change UNPROFOR's mandate had to be taken in the Security Council and in the world's capitals, not by UNPROFOR's commanders on the ground.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has recommended that the mandate of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Rwanda (UNAMIR) be extended for a further six months to 9 June 1995. In a report to the Security Council, dated 25 November, the Secretary-General said that during that period, UNAMIR would continue to facilitate peace and national reconciliation. It would also continue to support current efforts towards a regional approach to the problems created by the crisis in Rwanda. He underlined the importance of efforts by Governments in the region and the Organization of African Unity (OAU), both among themselves and in cooperation with the United Nations to find durable solutions to Rwanda's problems.

The Secretary-General said the creeping militarization of the refugee camps had created a painful dilemma for the international community. It was unacceptable that humanitarian assistance provided for bona fide refugees was being used to threaten, not only the security of the camps, but the stability of Rwanda. He called on the Rwandese Government to translate into concrete action, its assurances to promote conditions conducive to safe and voluntary repatriation and national reconciliation.

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Secretary-General Boutros-Ghali was in Rabat, Morocco, today where he met with the President of Portugal, Mario Soares. They discussed East Timor, Angola, Western Sahara, Mozambique, the Lockerbie affair and the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations. President Soares said he would participate in the proposed General Assembly meeting at the Summit level, to be held on 24 October 1995.

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The Secretary-General also met with Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al-Nahyan, President of the United Arab Emirates, with whom he discussed the situation in Bosnia, particularly the latest developments in Bihac. They also reviewed the status of the Middle East, including United Nations coordination activities in Gaza, as well as the issue of the islands which are in dispute between the United Arab Emirates and Iran. The Iraq-Kuwait situation was also discussed.

The Secretary-General was received by King Hassan II this afternoon prior to his departure to Marrakech to chair the second session of the Advisory Group for the preparation of the fiftieth anniversary of United Nations. The meeting was hosted by Sidi Mohammed, Crown Prince of Morocco.

On Sunday morning, the Secretary-General left Algiers for Tindouf, where he was welcomed at the airport by Algerian authorities, representatives of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Saguia el-Hamra and Rio de Oro (POLISARIO) and officials of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO). He later held discussions with the Secretary-General of the POLISARIO, Mohamed Abdelaziz on the projected referendum, the Security Council's position on the issue and the question of increasing the number of registration offices. They also reviewed the work of MINURSO and cooperation between the different parties and the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Western Sahara, Erik Jensen.

The Secretary-General arrived in Laayoune, Morocco, yesterday afternoon, where he was welcomed by the Moroccan authorities and MINURSO personnel. He visited the identification centre in Laayoune, the monument to the dead of MINURSO and met a Korean medical team from MINURSO.

Last night, the Secretary-General left Laayoune for Rabat, where he attended a dinner given in his honour by Abdellatif Filali, Prime Minister and Minister of State for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Morocco. Nelson Mandela, President of South Africa, also attended.

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The international community and the multinational force now in Haiti must make disarmament of pockets of resistance there an absolute priority, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Haiti, Claudette Werleigh, told the General Assembly today, as it considered democracy and human rights in that country. The Foreign Minister said that a system of justice must be established, in cooperation with international human rights organizations, to investigate human rights abuses which occurred during the three years of military rule in Haiti.

Introducing a draft resolution on the situation in Haiti, the representative of Peru said the draft would be the first confirmation of support from the international community since the return of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide to Haiti. By that draft, the Assembly would urge the international community and governmental and non-governmental organizations to increase their technical, economic and financial cooperation with Haiti in support of its economic and social development efforts. It would also urge

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support to strengthen Haitian institutions responsible for dispensing justice and guaranteeing democracy, respect for human rights, political stability and economic development.

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The Third Committee (Social, Humanitarian and Cultural) this morning approved a draft resolution by which the General Assembly would condemn the use of unaccompanied refugee minors as soldiers and human shields. The text would have the Assembly call upon the Secretary-General and United Nations agencies to mobilize adequate assistance to unaccompanied refugee minors in such areas as education, health and psychological rehabilitation.

By another draft, the Assembly would call upon States to fully respect the provisions in the Geneva Conventions and the Convention on the Rights of the Child which give children affected by armed conflicts special protection and treatment. Member States and United Nations agencies would be requested to facilitate humanitarian assistance to children during and in the immediate aftermath of armed conflict.

The Committee also approved three draft resolutions on refugee questions. By one text, the Assembly would call upon the UNHCR to develop a preparatory process leading to the convening of a regional conference, not later than 1996, to address the problems of refugees, displaced persons, other forms of involuntary displacement and returnees in the countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and neighbouring States.

Another draft resolution on assistance to refugees, returnees and displaced persons in Africa, would have the Assembly call upon the international community to strengthen UNHCR's emergency response capacity on the basis of its experience in Rwanda, and to continue providing support to Rwandese refugees and the host countries. The Committee also approved a draft decision by which the Assembly would call upon Governments, non-governmental organizations and representatives of indigenous groups to consider making contributions to the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Populations.

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